

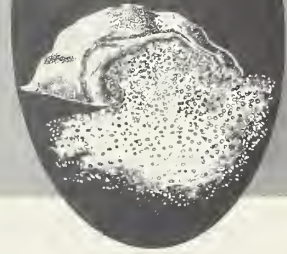
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FOREIGN AGRICULTURE CIRCULAR

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SEEDS



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CUBA IMPORTING SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES
OF U.S. VEGETABLE SEED AND FLOWER BULBS

Cuba's seed imports continue to be principally comprised of vegetable seeds, flower bulbs, and small quantities of flower seeds. However, relatively significant quantities of alfalfa seed for experimental purposes have been imported from the United States in the last few years.

Commercial seed production in Cuba is limited to Jaragua grass, Guinea grass, hybrid corn, and gladiolus (corn) bulbs.

Cuban imports of flower bulbs amounted to 2,468 thousand pounds during 1957. About 86 percent of this total were gladiolus bulbs; the remainder were dahlias. Practically all of the dahlias and a little more than half of the gladioli were imported from the Netherlands.

The United States has been gradually strengthening its position, percentage-wise, as a supplier of gladiolus bulbs, with its share of the total imports of gladioli increasing from approximately 20 percent in 1955, to more than 45 percent in 1957. According to trade sources, the reasons for this increase are: (1) price advantage of the U.S. bulbs over those of the Netherlands, and (2) improvement in the quality of the U.S. bulbs. Cuban imports of gladiolus bulbs from the United States are expected to exceed those from the Netherlands in 1958.

Exports of Bahia grass seed to the United States doubled in 1957, but flower bulbs and hybrid seed corn exports decreased sharply.

Wholesale prices for hybrid seed corn have remained the same during the last few years. Guinea grass seed was approximately \$49 per 100 pounds and Jaragua grass seed \$39.50 in March 1958.

The 1957 prices for gladiolus bulbs from the United States, c.i.f. Havana, ranged from \$16 to \$18 per 1,000 corms, while those from the Netherlands averaged \$18 per thousand.

Cuba's 1958 production of Jaragua grass seed is estimated to be 25 percent smaller and the Guinea grass crop will be 10 percent smaller than in 1957. The chief reason for the expected reduction is a decrease in local demand, because of the growing popularity of Pangola grass seed and, to a lesser extent, Coastal Bermuda grass.

No significant change in the Cuban seed situation is expected during 1959.

There are no official Cuban Government regulations or requirements that would tend to restrict or defer the normal import pattern of seeds and flower bulbs into Cuba. However, Cuban quarantine regulations require a certificate of sanitation from the country of origin.

CUBA: Commercial seed production, calendar years
1955 to 1957; 1958 forecast

Kind of seed	1955	1956	1957	1958 (forecast)
	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>
Jaragua grass	507	456	406	304
Guinea grass	507	482	507	456
Hybrid corn	122	203	213	254
Gladiolus bulbs	203	223	233	243

CUBA: Wholesale price range of seed, calendar years
1955 to 1957; 1958 (January-October)

Kind of Seed	1955	1956	1957	1958 (Jan.-Oct.)
	<u>Dollars per 100-pounds</u>			
Jaragua grass	\$39.50-49.50	\$24.75-44.50	\$29.75-39.50	\$29.75-39.50
Guinea grass	39.50-49.50	29.75-49.50	34.50-49.50	34.50-49.50
Hybrid corn	24.75-29.75	24.75-29.75	24.75-29.75	24.75-29.75

CUBA: Seed imports and country of origin, calendar years
1955 to 1957, 1958 forecast

Kind of seed	Country of origin	1955	1956	1957	1958 (forecast)
		<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>
Alfalfa	U.S.	3	3	8	10
Clover	U.S.	1	<u>1/</u>	-	-
Millet	U.S.	1	<u>1/</u>	1	1
	Europe	-	<u>1/</u>	-	-
	Total	1	<u>1</u>	1	1
Vegetable	U.S.	<u>2/</u> 55	<u>2/</u> 60	<u>2/</u> 50	51
	Other	1	6	4	5
	Total	56	66	54	56
Tree & Shrub	U.S. <u>3/</u>	7	<u>2/</u> 5	4	5
Flower	U.S. <u>3/</u>	4	<u>2/</u> 4	<u>2/</u> 4	4
Flower bulbs <u>4/</u> <u>5/</u>		1,177	2,252	2,468	2,535

1/ Less than 500 pounds. 2/ Estimated. 3/ Mostly from the U.S. 4/ Approximately 80 percent to 90 percent are gladiolus and the remainder dahlia bulbs. 5/ It is estimated that practically all dahlia bulbs and 55 percent to 70 percent gladiolus bulbs come from the Netherlands and the remainder from the United States.

CUBA: Seed exports and country of destination, calendar years
1955 to 1957, 1958 forecast

Kind of seed	Country of destination	1955	1956	1957	1958 (forecast)
		<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>	<u>1,000 pounds</u>
Bahia grass	U.S.	47	20	41	30
Flower bulbs <u>1/</u>	U.S.	50	54	<u>2/</u> 6	5
Hybrid corn	U.S.	11	9	2	-
	Guatemala	-	34	20	36
	Panama	-	4	10	-
	Other	1	1	1	15
	Total	12	48	33	51
Other seeds <u>2/</u>	U.S.	32	14	26	25
	Venezuela	3	72	63	66
	Other	3	24	22	20
	Total	38	110	111	111

1/ Mostly gladiolus bulbs. 2/ Approximately 52 percent went to the Dominican Republic and the remainder to the United States.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Official Business

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